

## Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01  
INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15  
IO-13 MCT-01 OC-06 CCO-00 NEA-10 ARA-06 ACDA-07 OMB-01  
NSCE-00 SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 SCA-01 DHA-02 OPR-02  
/109 W

-----022013 117738 /45

O O 021930Z MAR 77 ZFF 4

FM AMEMBASSY BONN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6096

INFO AMEMBASSY NAIROBI IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 BONN 03798

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, CASC, GW, UG, US

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR ELLERKMANN ON AMIN'S POSSIBLE  
MOTIVES

FOLLOWING REPORT FROM AMBASSADOR ELLERKMANN  
(FRG NUMBER 96 RECEIVED FROM FONOFF AT 1745Z MARCH 2.

BEGIN TEXT:

"RE: POSSIBLE MOTIVES FOR AMIN'S SHOWDOWN  
WITH AMERICANS AND FINAL CANCELLATION OF MEETING

1. PRESIDENT AMIN WAS HURT BADLY BY REMARKS  
OF AMBASSADOR YOUNG AND PRESIDENT CARTER ABOUT  
KILLINGS IN UGANDA. EVER SINCE ELECTION DAY  
NOVEMBER 3 LAST YEAR, HE MADE ALL KINDS OF FRIENDLY  
AND POSITIVE COMMENTS ON NEW ADMINISTRATION AND EVEN  
SENT CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE TO PRESIDENT-ELECT.  
THROUGH VARIOUS CHANNELS HE COMMUNICATED THAT HE WISHED  
VERY MUCH THAT U.S. EMBASSY IN KAMPALA IS RE-OPENED.  
THE FIRST AND ONLY REPLY HE RECEIVED WAS CRITICISM

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ON KILLINGS IN HIS COUNTRY. HE TOOK REVENGE WITH THOSE  
HE COULD PUT HIS HAND ON: AMERICANS LIVING IN UGANDA.

2. SITUATION WAS IMMEDIATELY EXPLOITED BY PLO,  
WHICH HAS NOT FORGOTTEN WHAT HAD HAPPENED AT ENTEBBE  
AIRPORT LAST YEAR AND IS OUT FOR REVENGE. THIS IS  
DOCUMENTED IN MESSAGE FROM AMIN TO PRESIDENT CARTER.

3. AMIN REALLY SEEMED TO HAVE FEARED THAT AMERICANS MIGHT INVADE UGANDA. HIS REQUEST TO LIBYANS AND CUBANS TO ASSIST HIM MILITARILY THEREFORE MIGHT HAVE BEEN GENUINE.

4. AT THE SAME TIME, THE MILITARY BUILD-UP AND NOISE HELPED HIM TO STABILIZE SITUATION IN THE COUNTRY. FOR MANY SHOWDOWN WITH AMERICANS WAS USED BY HIM TO DIVERT WORLD OPINION FROM WHAT WAS AND STILL IS HAPPENING IN UGANDA.

5. WHAT AMIN'S REAL PLANS WERE WHEN HE CHANGED VENUE TO ENTEBBE AIRPORT WILL PROBABLY NEVER BE KNOWN. I STILL BELIEVE THAT HE DID NOT INTEND TO DO ANY PHYSICAL HARM TO ANY AMERICAN. BUT HIS ANGRY AND INSULTING REMARKS AGAINST AFRICAN HEADS OF STATE WHO INTERVENED ON BEHALF OF AMERICANS SHOW THAT THEY HAVE SPOILED SHOW FOR HIM WHICH HE WAS ANXIOUS TO CELEBRATE. I ASSUME THAT HE WAS PREPARED FOR A VERY HUMILIATING OR EVEN DIRTY AFFAIR AS HE HAS DONE WITH THE BRITISH SEVERAL TIMES. I STILL EXCLUDE ANY PLAN BEYOND THIS LIKE LOCKING UP AMERICANS AT THE OLD AIRPORT IN REVENGE FOR DEFEAT BY ISRAELI AT SAME PLACE LAST YEAR.

6. POSSIBLE MOTIVES FOR THE FINAL CANCELLATION OF MEETING ARE:

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O O 021930Z MAR 77 ZFF 4  
FM AMEMBASSY BONN  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 6097  
INFO AMEMBASSY NAIROBI IMMEDIATE

S E C R E T SECTION 02 OF 02 BONN 03798

INTERVENTIONS BY MOBUTU, KING KHALID  
AND OTHERS.

-FEARS HE MIGHT NOT SURVIVE AMERICAN INVASION.

-REALIZATION THAT WITHOUT AMERICAN PILOTS THERE  
IS NO UGANDAN AIRLINE. STAYING AWAY OF BOEING 707  
AND OF HIS CHIEF PILOT MIGHT ALSO HAVE PLAYED A ROLE.

-REALIZATION THAT 25 AMERICANS ARE WORKING  
FOR UNDP AND THAT SOME OF THEM DECLARED THEIR  
SOLIDARITY WITH THEIR FELLOW AMERICANS.

-REALIZATION THAT APPROXIMATELY 15 TO 20 PERCENT  
OF AMERICANS IN UGANDA ARE BLACK AMERICANS.

-REALIZATION THAT WEDNESDAY, MARCH 2, WAS  
MOHAMMED'S BIRTHDAY AND THAT THE MUSLIM SUPREME COUNCIL  
ALREADY HAD INVITED TO 'MAULED' AT  
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12:30 P.M. TO THE COUNCIL HEADQUARTERS WITH INVITATIONS  
ALSO TO DIPLOMATS GONE OUT.

7. WHETHER THE SHOWDOWN WITH AMERICANS HAS COME  
TO AN END IS DIFFICULT TO SAY. SINCE THE MEETING  
WITH AMERICANS WAS NOT CANCELLED VOLUNTARILY, AMIN  
MIGHT REGARD CANCELLATION AS DEFEAT. THIS WOULD  
EXPLAIN HIS BITING REMARKS ABOUT MOBUTU AND OTHERS  
AND HIS NEW ATTACKS ON AMERICANS, WHEN HE SAW SPECIAL  
ENVOY FROM PRESIDENT OF RWANDA ON MARCH 1.

8. ON THE OTHER HAND I BELIEVE THAT AMIN SOON  
WILL COME TO HIS SENSES AGAIN AND FORGET THE WHOLE  
AFFAIR. WHETHER HE, AT A LATER DATE, WILL COME BACK  
TO THE AMERICANS OR THINK OF SOMETHING ELSE, WILL  
HAVE TO BE SEEN. NEW TARGET MAY BE OTHERS, PERHAPS  
THE MISSIONARIES IN GENERAL. WITH AMIN ONE NEVER KNOWS.  
THE ONLY MEASURE ONE CAN TAKE, IF ONE LIVES HERE, IS

TO REMAIN CALM. ELLERKMANN"

END TEXT.

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## Message Attributes

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**Decaption Note:**  
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**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
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**Disposition Date:** 22 May 2009  
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**Subject:** AMBASSADOR ELLERKMANN ON AMIN'S POSSIBLE MOTIVES FOLLOWING REPORT FROM AMBASSADOR ELLERKMANN  
**TAGS:** PFOR, CASC, GE, UG, US, (ELLERKMANN, RICHARD), (AMIN DADA, IDI)  
**To:** STATE  
**Type:** TE  
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